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JAPANESE ROOM.

RESIDENCE OF MR. EDWARD H. WILLIAMS,
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

(SEE OPPOSITE PAGE).

THE room was fitted up to exhibit the fine collection of Japanese articles which the owner had acquired during several visits to Japan. Among these were a series of panels referring to Japanese myths, taken from a dilapidated temple, which have been introduced as a sort of frieze decoration and furnished the motif for the design.

The room is a one story addition to the house, eighteen by twenty-four feet inside measurement, and was originally a billiard-room. It was built without windows, and lighted by a lantern in the center of the ceiling, which was coved up to it from all sides above a stucco cornice of no very pronounced character. The room was connected with the house by a door at the end of one of the larger sides. The general shape and arrangement of the room has not been changed although its entire character has been altered.

A door has been cut opposite the present communicating door, and two windows opposite each other in the larger side, about half way between the doors and the end of the room. A chimney with open fire place has been built in the center of the end furthest from the doors, and the opening through ceiling to lantern has been closed by a glazed ceiling light. These comprise all the structural changes. The space each side of chimney, and the whole length of side opposite, have been filled by cabinets for the display of articles of Japanese manufacture, and an elaborate mantelpiece decorates the chimney with numerous shelves for the accommodation of some of the smaller specimens, the fire-place being surrounded by tiles painted by Japanese artists with their usual minute fidelity to nature, and lined with cast iron back and jambs from a spirited design by Vedder, representing the Mythical dragon pursuing the sacred Crystal through the waves. The character of the design of mantels, cabinets, paneled dado and finish to doors and windows is thoroughly Japanese, and was studied from specimens preserved in the Memorial Museum from the Japanese collection at the Centennial Exhibition, and, although handled with some freedom to accommodate it to modern requirements, is calculated to deceive a native as to its genuineness.

All this work is executed in cherry, ebonized and finished with a soft dull gloss. The inside shutters to windows have no panels or rolling slats, but are framed in the usual way and filled with bamboo lattice painted on the inside with flowers, birds, etc., and blacked and varnished on the back, the painted panels showing well inside when the room is lighted.

The glass in windows is painted with Japanese figures, birds, and foliage, and that in the ceiling light represents a trellis of bamboo poles tied together and covered with fruit and foliage; the side lights forming a border all around, being arranged to open on hinges for ventilation, and operated by silken cords looped up against the walls.

The wall from dado to cornice inclusive, is colored and decorated with sprays of leaves and flowers and the verses of a Japanese poem, an English translation of which is framed and hung in the room. The frieze between the Japanese panels already mentioned and the cornice, are enriched with color and gold, while the cove above is in blue, fading towards the top where it meets the ceiling light upon which are painted branches of trees as if seen above the top of wall, with flying storks and other birds and flowers in natural colors. The architects were Messrs. Wilson Bros. & Co. The wall painting was done by Mr. George Herzog after designs by the architect, the glass by Mr. Murray Gibson, and the woodwork by Messrs. G. W. Smith & Co., all of Philadelphia.

The room is lighted by gas burners above the glass ceiling, and by four lanterns made of brass and cut glass, besides two elaborate cluster brackets on the mantel representing dragons; these latter are of cast brass and were manufactured by Messrs. Schneider, Campbell & Co., of New York, the others being made from architects'

design, by Messrs. Gibson, Shaw & Co., of Philadelphia.

The floor is laid with mosaic in oak and polished, and covered by a specially designed rug made by Messrs. Templeton, of Glasgow, and ordered through Messrs. McCallum, Crease & Sloan of Philadelphia.

The room has a handsome center table and a few other pieces of furniture in keeping with the design, and the cabinets and shelves are fitted with a very rich and interesting collection of Japanese articles, the whole effect, especially when lighted, being very rich and striking. It was fitted up during the winter of 1882, while the owner was at Santa Barbara, Cal.

NOTES, INDOOR AND OUT.

THE rage for novelty in architecture which has peppered the land with such an extraordinary variety of habitations, picturesque and otherwise, has taken a new departure. It is now announced that a company has been organized in Switzerland for the manufacture of chalets in sections for shipment abroad. The sales in America are stated to be already quite extensive, and our seaside and inland resorts will, doubtless, next summer begin to display the semblance of those villages which dot the cantons and make such charming features of the Alpine landscape. Against the Swiss chalet, for itself, we have nothing to say. It is a part of the land it originated in. But it will be as completely out of place here as a Kafir hut would be in Newport. The chalet is built for warmth and protection against the weather in a rigorous climate and it answers that purpose admirably. It is dark and close and stuffy even in the Alpine atmosphere. In this country where we build summer houses for coolness, it will be a flagrant violation of common sense. But fashion has decreed quite as nonsensical sacrifices before, and there are beyond question people enough in America willing to suffer for style to make the business of the Interlaken company profitable.

THE log cabin, with such modern variations as are necessary to render it comfortably habitable, is far better adapted to our climate than the characteristic architecture of the Alps. For our seaside, the charming villas of the Mediterranean coast, and for our mountains the log cottage. If we must have eccentricity of architecture, let it at least be appropriate to the place it embellishes or renders curious.

ANOTHER architectural oddity which has recently become altogether too common in this city is the insertion of bulls-eyes of colored glass in the outer doors of houses. Seen by day, these gorgeous disks only break the symmetry of the door. At night, when the hall within is lighted, they glare at you like demons' eyes. By night or day they are equally without appropriateness or meaning. A door is made to defend a house, and should possess at least the semblance of solidity. To render it a mere flimsy and vulgar ornament is not only to destroy its character but to deprive it of its use.

BOLD and simple carving is the only ornamentation the outer door admits of. The moment the decoration of the door goes beyond this it becomes trivial and inappropriate, for all filigree work detracts from the solidity of the portal and consequently from its consistency. The enormous size of a palace gate renders it possible to cover it with carving without materially affecting its semblance of strength, but the door of the average New York house is mostly different from that of a historic mansion and should be treated accordingly.

CONSISTENCY in interior decoration is a virtue only too many people, who have interiors to decorate, lack. The vulgar excess of ornamentation which renders an apartment so hideous, no matter how fine the component parts of its decoration may be, is becoming altogether too frequent. We are informed, for instance, that "china pugs are ornamented with a harness of velvet ribbon or alligator skin, and a big bow of orange ottoman ribbon is tied on the collar. Rugs of crazy patchwork, of olive or crimson plush, are placed for them to rest on, with a little square satin pillow at one end." As if the china pug itself was not sufficiently hideous the ingenuity of the crazy worker is called into play to render its ugliness more aggressive.

THE question as to the proper background to hang pictures on is one frequently raised in these

days of critical artistic taste. The old maroon background still holds its own, but some galleries have recently been decorated in walls of dead gold, or what is better still, with Japanese gold paper toned down by glazes of bitumen. This makes a very rich wall and one which sets off any frame and does not impair the effect of any picture. The dead gold wall should be prepared with metal of the best quality. Good gold leaf will last as long as a house, without tarnishing, while poor leaf soon blackens. If the wall cracks the crack can always be filled, and a few leaves of gold laid over the scar. After the gold has been applied and is hard dry, glaze it with bitumen to a rich brown golden tone. For all ordinary uses, however, Japanese paper is just as good and not nearly as costly. A gray wall should always be avoided in hanging pictures. The grays of a painting are among its chief beauties and approximating tints only in the background is certain to impair their value.

JAPANESE bamboo portières are beginning to appear in the market. They are made of fine bamboo rods in joints strung on cord, and are really simply a long fringe of dry reed. They are novel and pretty but entirely out of place in this climate, where decoration should be consistent and useful as well as ornamental. They are made for tropical temperatures, where a free circulation of air is desirable, and belong to the summer cottage, not to the town house. It would be as reasonable to use them instead of textile hangings as it would be to use paper in our windows instead of glass because the Japanese do.

A FASHION paper announces: "Silver finger bowls are now in fashion. They are only used at small dinner parties, and are presented on tiny silver trays." As a matter of fact the finger bowl ought never to make its appearance at table now-a-days. It is a relic of luxurious barbarism, and an insult to the civilization of the present. In the days when knives and forks were unknown or rare, and everyone, from king to pauper, fed with their fingers, the process of washing between courses or after a meal was a very praiseworthy one. But as we no longer feed like wild beasts we have no occasion for the practice of a beastly time. In a world elegant enough to use finger bowls people should be able to eat without soiling their fingers.

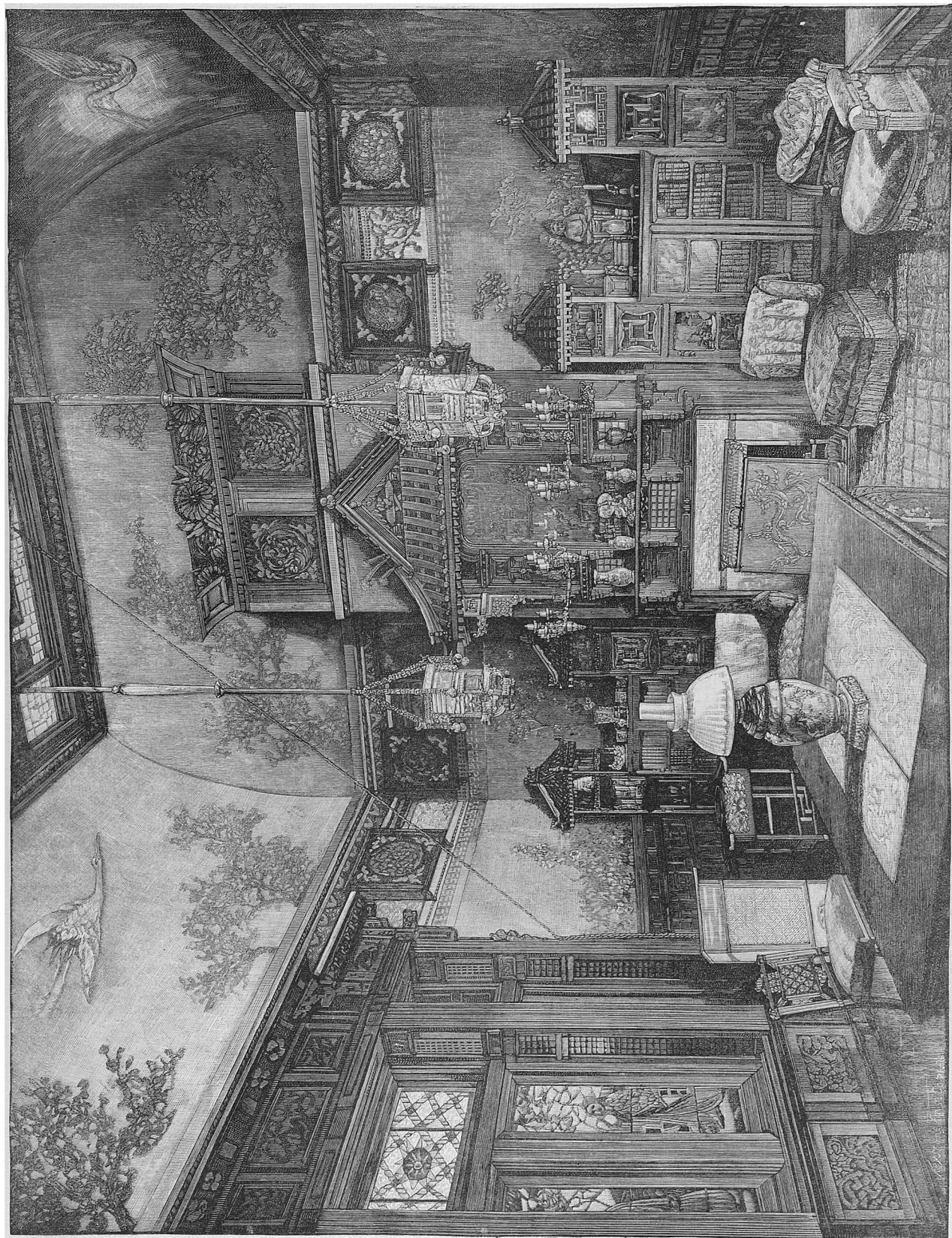
ABOUT the most melancholy bit of decoration one can encounter is a tuft of preserved flowers. These poor little blossoms whose lives have been drowned out in hot paraffine, offer in their pale and spiritless existence a standing protest against themselves. The mission of a flower is accomplished when its freshness fades. To decorate your house with munified bouquets when fresh ones are at hand is an insult to nature.

THE trade in bogus antiquities must be in a flourishing condition abroad by the reports of the artists who have been to Europe this summer. In Nuremberg, Salzburg, and other of the sleepy German cities which until lately were almost out of the track of travel, old furniture is now manufactured by the cargo. Holland has entered the business, while the "old established" houses in France, Spain, and Italy are doing the best business they have known. Considering the excellent quality of the counterfeit antiques made in this country, it seems a pity our collectors have to go abroad to be humbugged, but perhaps the foreign origin of the counterfeit renders its imposture less flagrant.

SOME idea of the profitable nature of the trade in curios and bric-a-brac may be obtained from the fact that a man who began business two years ago by peddling a couple of dozen odds and ends he had picked up at auction, and who had absolutely no other capital, is now the proprietor of a store in Philadelphia, doing a constantly increasing trade.

If you cannot afford to indulge in genuine antiques, do not hesitate to buy good imitations. For decorative purposes they are just as good as the originals.





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